

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claim 1 is pending, with Claim 1 amended and Claims 3, 5, 10, 12, 14, and 15 canceled by the present amendment.

In the Official Action, Claims 1 and 3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0036377, now U.S. Patent 6,824,131, hereinafter Togashi in view of website <http://www.sdplastics.com/polyeth.html> (dated January 21, 1997, hereinafter SDPLASTICS); Claims 1 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Togashi in view of the article entitled “Application of Engineering Plastic Materials to Office Automation and Audio-Visual Appliances in Japan” (hereinafter Yasufuku); Claims 10 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Togashi and Yasufuku in view of website <http://www.craftechind.com/material.htm> (dated January 20, 1998, hereinafter CRAFTECHIND); Claims 10 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Togashi and Yasufuku in view of website <http://www.tplast.ee/plast10en.php> (dated August 27, 2002, hereinafter TPLAST); and Claims 10 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Togashi and Yasufuku in view of website http://www.polymerplastics.com/performance_vespel.shtml (dated August 16, 2000, hereinafter VESPEL).

Briefly recapitulating, amended Claim 1 is directed to

An image forming apparatus, comprising:

an image forming section; and

a sheet feed apparatus aligned to feed a sheet to the image forming section and comprising

a sheet feed roller in pressing contact with an uppermost sheet of a plurality of sheets, and

a tilt member opposing the sheet feed roller, said tilt member including

a tilt member main body,

a contact face in direct contact with the sheet feed roller, and

a tilt face in contact with an edge of the uppermost sheet, wherein

said tilt face and said contact face are made of a first material consisting of one of

polyethylene (PE), and

polybutylene terephthalate (PBT),

said tilt member main body is made of a second material different from the first material, said second material being one of a ABS resin, polyacetal (POM), and polycarbonate (PC).

Claim 1 is amended to recite Applicants' invention with varying scope. Support for this amendment is found in paragraph [0048] of Applicants' published application. No new matter is added.

In Togashi, the tilt member 6, including the contact face, is integrally molded of a synthetic resin.¹ In at least the third through fifth embodiments of Togashi, the contact face of the integrally molded tilt member is covered by a metal plate or carbon/glass fiber reinforced hard synthetic resin and in contact with a sheet feed roller.² However, Togashi does not disclose or suggest a tilt member main body made of a second material different from the first material. Applicants' dual material construction affords greater performance and lower manufacturing and maintenance costs as compared to the integrally molded construct of Togashi.

Furthermore, Togashi teaches away from Applicants' claimed invention. That is, all of the embodiments of Togashi require that the component in question is integrally molded.

¹ Togashi, column 2, line 64 through column 3, line 4.

² Togashi, column 2, line 64 through column 3, line 4.

Instead, upon reading Togashi, one skilled in the art would not be motivated to replace the integrally molded tilt member with Applicants' claimed two-material construction. On the contrary, upon reading Togashi, one skilled in the art would be motivated to consider various integrally molded solutions. Applicants have considered the remaining applied references and submit these references do not cure the deficiencies of Togashi.

Accordingly, in view of the present amendment and in light of the previous discussion, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in condition for allowance and respectfully request an early and favorable action to that effect.

Respectfully submitted,

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